

# CHAMBERS' EDINBURGH JOURNAL

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, EDITORS OF "CHAMBERS'S INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE,"  
"EDUCATIONAL COURSE," &c.

No. 228.

SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 1836.

PRICE THREE HALFPENCE.

## FALLACIES OF THE YOUNG. CIRCUMSTANCES.

This is a fatal word. There is no shortcoming in virtue or in acquirements, no positive transgression or failure, for which human nature does not easily make it serve as an excuse. In reality, it does excuse much; but this only enables us to make it an excuse for what it ought to have nothing to do with. The difficulty is in drawing the line beyond which it ought not to be held as a palliation. The weak who have to look back upon a life spent less innocently than it ought to have been, feeling that some of their errors were unavoidable, and that some of their temptations were very great, hurriedly patch up a treaty with conscience, and soothe themselves with the idea, that, from first to last, they have been the victims of circumstances. The unfortunate, in the same way, slump the affairs in which they have been themselves to blame, with those which fortune shaped untowardly, and, with the latter alone distinguished in their recollection, vindicate their self-love by considering themselves as altogether the victims of circumstances. The mediocre in talents and attainments, finding, after a long trial, that they have not made so much way as certain others whom they are pleased to consider their equals, or perhaps their inferiors, learn to account for a fact which otherwise would be humiliating, by esteeming themselves as the victims of circumstances. The idle, the languid, the self-indulgent, are ready with the same easy excuse for every consequence of their follies. There is indeed no error of omission or of commission, none so great or so little, from the breaking of a heart to the neglect of epistolary correspondence, which may not be satisfactorily accounted for by the mention of "circumstances." There is a fine generality in the expression—a power of any-meaning or no-meaning—which fits it for all purposes alike. It is the great permanent, non-papal, and self-applied indulgence of mankind. It might be likened to a revenue permit upon which a dexterous smuggler contrives to pass goods to fifty times the ostensible amount. Such is our general conduct in regard to any transaction or posture of affairs which we feel to be in the least displeasing or discreditable. If, on the other hand, the transaction, series of events, or posture of affairs, be agreeable or honourable, or supposed to be so, this faithful ally, like many others in the case of victory, is apt to come but poorly off. In that case, we are more likely to diminish and overlook the efficacy of all contingent causes, and to appropriate to ourselves the whole merit, whatever that may be. In questions of this kind, we act very much as we are apt to do when we have to play a dumb hand at cards against ourselves. Somehow or other, the dumb hand very rarely chances to be the winner.

The fallacy about circumstances is particularly apt to beset the young, who, hearing their elders so frequently applying it as a palliative to their wounded conscientiousness or self-love, very readily adopt the conclusion that "circumstances" is every thing, and that they can only thrive or preserve rectitude as this bugbear will let them. It is therefore of extreme importance that a just view of the relation of man to circumstances should be laid down.

We are, then, most undeniably placed here amidst circumstances which may operate very powerfully upon us, and which are sometimes seen to overwhelm the good and great, notwithstanding the noblest resistance. But man is also invested with the power of operating upon circumstances. As a race, indeed, men in a great measure fashion circumstances for themselves. It is only the individual, operated upon, as he is, by others in society, that can be said to be in

any considerable degree subject to circumstances. Even in this point of view, we are all possessed of the means of acting and counteracting upon circumstances. We are placed, as it were, in a balance between the power of circumstances over us, and our power over them; and it is precisely as we act in this critical position that we entitle ourselves to praise or incur censure. If the economy of the world had been arranged upon a different principle, there could have been no such thing as either merit or demerit. Small and doubtful, according to proverbial wisdom, is that virtue which never was tempted. Small and doubtful, it may be added, is that talent which has encountered no difficulties. Little must be that industry which has been exerted upon tasks which it was a pleasure to execute. And slight is that benevolence which gives only what costs little in the acquisition, or is little appreciated. Circumstances, while so apt to be abused as the palliative of failure and demerit, are the only true measure of merit and success. The freightage of great minds is to be estimated by the displacement which they produce, by the extent to which they modify and re-act upon what presses around them. Nor is it only by what has been done that we are to reckon mankind, but also by what has been resisted, and what has been overcome. Thus, as the mite of the widow was a more splendid act of charity than could have been almost any donation from a person of unbounded wealth, less degrees of absolute virtue may be the greater relatively. There may even have been richer deservings in many criminals than in those who judged them. The constancy, however, of the untried and untempted, is a matter entirely apart. That it should gain approbation which it does not deserve, forms no excuse for those who are seriously tried and found wanting. If it did, we should have every man holding himself not only guiltless, but positively meritorious, by virtue of an arbitrary supposition of the greater guilt or the less deservings of another. How can any one know what would be the conduct of another, in the event of his being tempted or tried? No—it is by a measure of the contentings of each man with the adverse circumstances of his own particular case, that we are to judge and be judged. In the mysterious economy of the world, the less happy lot may light upon any, and all must be prepared for it. We may be ultimately overpowered by circumstances; but our merit will be in precise proportion to the vigour we have shown in withstanding and reacting upon them.

To assure ourselves of these truths, we have only to reflect on what it is that we generally admire most in the deserving. Is it the rank or fortune which they may have attained? No—these may excite a certain kind of homage, but no true admiration. We only bestow this tribute of our hearts upon the fortitude they may have displayed in bearing up against unfavourable circumstances, and the vigour with which they may have crushed a way through them. The truth is, that all men feel themselves to be in a state of constant militation against circumstances—they feel this, and sympathise with each other in a strife which calls for the exercise of all the better parts of their nature. So thoroughly was this sentiment impressed upon the most enlightened of all ancient nations, that to them virtue and heroic endurance were identical ideas. And, even now, human life presents few sights more beautiful or cheering than that of a man who, whether by active courage and strong will, or by steadfast impassiveness, triumphs over circumstances. It is all one whether the spectacle be presented in the higher or the lower walks of life. The poor man who patiently endures the sorrows and crosses of his lot,

and, to use his own phrase, makes the best of his circumstances, is as noble a being as ever was Brutus or Cato of Utica.

## READINGS IN OLD BALLADS.

BALLADS are an important portion of the literature of the common people. After all the elaborate dissertations which have been written respecting their origin, we can say no more than that such things have at all times within the memory of living persons been sung by the lowly and illiterate, for the same recreative and solacing purposes which are now chiefly served by the reading of printed books and newspapers. Even now, it is rarely that an incident of a very remarkable nature occurs, without becoming the subject of versification to some cleverer peasant or some obscure city-bred poetaster. The old ballads which have come down to us, appear to be simply a selection of the best of that class of compositions—those which Fame has deemed most tolerable—the flower of clownish wit for centuries. It was not till the year 1755 that any educated person deemed so well of the old English ballads as to publish any of them. The classic collection of Dr Percy then appeared, and for the first time made these effusions of untutored genius familiar to the refined world. Since then, another collection of English traditional poetry has been published by Mr Evans, while Pinkerton, Scott, Finlay, Jamieson, Kinloch, and Motherwell, have, in a series of publications of more recent date, gathered all the ballads that could be considered as exclusively Scottish, amounting to nearly two hundred. The simplicity which distinguishes the diction of these compositions, the romantic incidents, characteristic of an early state of society, upon which many of them turn, and the wild strain of tenderness and tragic passion which they so often breathe, have now placed them, in the estimation of all cultivated persons, on the same level with the more formal literature of the learned world.

The Scottish ballads may be arranged in three classes—first, those which relate to early romantic events, and for which no foundation in fact can now be traced; second, those which relate to incidents of actual occurrence, and of which the characters, however disguised, are known to have been real; and, third, ballads referring to historical incidents. In all probability, the first, as well as the two last classes, were suggested by real transactions; in time, however, they have acquired a character so entirely apart from all the present aspects of society, as now to appear pure fictions. We shall begin with a few readings from this class of ballads. The following, entitled "Willie and May Margaret," is one which has been very recently given to the world, and may therefore be new to the most of our readers:—

Willie stood in his stable door,  
And clapping at his steed,  
And looking ower his white fingers,  
His nose began to bleed.  
"Gie corn unto my horse, mother;  
Gie meat unto my man;  
For I maun gang to Margaret's bower,  
Before the night comes on."  
"O stay at hame, now, my son Willie!  
The wind blows cauld and dour;  
The night will be baith mirk and late,  
Before ye reach her bower."  
"O though the night were never so dark,  
Or the wind blew never so cauld,  
I will be in my Margaret's bower,  
Before two hours be tauld."  
"O gin ye gang to May Margaret,  
Without the leave o' me,  
Clyde's water's wide and deep enough—  
My mallow drown thoe!"

"The guid steed that I ride upon,  
Cost me thrice threitie pound;  
And I'll put trust in his swift foot,  
To hae me safe to land."

He mounted on his guid swift steed,  
And fast he rade awa;  
But ere he cam to Clyde water,  
Fu' loud the wind did blaw.

As he rade over yon hie hie hill,  
And down yon dowie den,  
There was a roar in Clyde water,  
Wad feared a hunder men.

"O roaring Clyde, ye roar ower loud,  
Your stream is wondrous strang;  
Mak me your wreck as I come back,  
But spare me as I gang!"

Sae he has swam through Clyde water,  
Though it was wide and deep;  
And he came to May Margaret's door,  
When all were fast asleep.

O he's gane round, and round about,  
And tirl'd at the pin;  
But doors were steekit and windows barred,  
And nane wad let him in.

"O open the door to me, Margaret!  
O open, and let me in!  
For my boots are fu' o' Clyde water,  
And frozen to the brim."

"Oh, wha is this at my bower door,  
That calls me by my name?"  
"It is your first love, sweet Willie,  
This night newly come hame."

"I hae few lovers therout, therout,  
As few hae I therein;  
The ae best love that ever I had,  
Was here just late yestreen."

"O gin ye winna open the door,  
Nor yet be kind to me,  
Now tell me o' some out-chamber  
Where I this night may be."

"Ye canna win in this night, Willie,  
Nor here ye canna be;  
For I've no chambers, out nor in,  
Nor ane but barely three:

The tane o' them is fu' o' corn;  
The tother is fu' o' hay;  
The tother is fu' o' merry young men—  
They winna remove till day."

"O fare ye weel, then, May Margaret,  
Sae better mayna be;  
I've won my mother's malison,  
Coming this night to thee."

He's mounted on his coal-black steed;  
O but his heart was wae!  
But, ere he cam to Clyde water,  
Twas half up ower the brae.

As he rade up yon hie hie hill,  
And down yon dowie den,  
The roar that was in Clyde water,  
Wad feared a hunder men.

The very hour sweet William sank  
Into the pot\* sae deep,  
Up it wakened her, May Margaret,  
Out of her drowsy sleep.

"Come here, come here, my mother dear,  
And read this dreik dreim:  
I dreim'd my love was at our yetts,  
And nane wad let him in."

"Lie still, lie still, now, May Margaret,  
Lie still and tak your rest;  
Syn your true love was at our yetts,  
It's but twa quarters past."

Nimble, nimble rase she up,  
And nimble put she on;  
And the higher that the lady cried,  
The louder blew the win.

The firsten step that she steppit,  
She steppit to the kute;†  
"Ochon, alas!" said that lady,  
"This water's wondrous deep."

The neisten step that she waide;‡ in,  
She waide to the knee;  
Says sho, "I wad wade farther in,  
Gin I my love could see."

The neisten step that she waide in,  
She waide to the chin;  
The deepest pot in Clyde water,  
She got sweet Willie in.

"You've had a cruel mother, Willie,  
And I have had another;  
But we shall sleep in Clyde water,  
Like sister and like brother!"

On the present occasion, we shall be content with presenting an abbreviated version of one which bears traces of a more than usually imaginative character—it is entitled "The Gay Goss Hawk."

"O waly, waly, my gay goss hawk,  
Gin your feathering be shien!"  
"And waly, waly, my master dear,  
Gin ye look pale and lean!"

O have ye tint, at tournament,  
Your sword, or yet your spear?  
Or mourn ye for the southern lass,  
Whom ye may not win near?"

"I have not tint, at tournament,  
My sword, nor yet my spear;  
But sair I mourn for my true love,  
Wi' mony a bitter tear."

But weels me on ye, my gay goss hawk,  
Ye can balth speak and flee:  
Ye sail carry a letter to my love,  
Bring an answer back to me."

"But how sail I your true love find,  
Or how sail I her know?  
I bear a tongue ne'er wif her spake,  
An eye that ne'er her saw."

\* A deep eddy-pool in a river is often called a pot, in Scotland.

† Ankle. ‡ A varied Scottish preterite of wade.

"O weel sail ye my true love ken,  
As sure as ye her see;  
For, of a' the flours o' fair England,  
The fairest flour is she."

The thing o' my love's face that's white,  
Is like the dove or maw;†  
The thing o' my love's face that's red,  
Is like blude shed on snaw.

And even at my true love's bower door,  
There grows a flourishing birch;‡  
And ye moun aif and sing theron,  
As she comes frae the kirk."

Lord William has written a love letter,  
Put it under the pinions grey;  
And he's awa to southern land,  
As fast as his wings can gae.

"Feast on, feast on, my maidens a';  
The wine flows you amang;  
Till I gang to my shot-window,  
To hear yon birdie's sang."

"Have there a letter from Lord William;  
He says he sent you three;  
He canna wait your love langer,  
But for your sake he'll die."

"I sent him the rings from my white fingers,  
The garlands off my hair;  
I sent him the heart that's in my breast;  
What wad my love hae mair?"

Gae bid him bake his bridal bread,  
And brew his bridal ale;  
And I shall meet him at Mary's kirk,  
Lang, lang ere it be stale."

The lady then engages her father and other friends, in the event of her death, to bury her at the fourth church within the Scottish border.

Then down as deid that lady dropt,  
Beside her mother's knee;  
When out and spak an auld witch wife,  
By the fire-side sat she.

Says, "Drop the het lead on her cheek,  
And drop it on her chin;  
And drop it on her rosy lips;  
And she will speak again.  
For much a young lady will do,  
To her true love to win."

They drapt the het lead on her cheek,  
Sae did they on her chin;  
They drapt it on her red rose lips;  
But they breathed none again.

She neither chattered with her teeth,  
Nor shivered with her chin.  
"Alas, alas!" her father cried,  
"There is nae breath within."

Then up arose her sevin brethren,  
And howed to her a bier;  
They hewed it frae the solid air,  
Laid it ower wif silver clear.

Then up and gat her sevin sisters,  
And sewed to her a keil;  
And every steek that they put in,  
Sewed to a siller bell.

"O weel is me, my jolly goss hawk,  
That ye can speak and flee!  
Come show me any love tokens,  
That you have brought to me."

"She sends you the rings from her white fingers,  
The garlands from her hair;  
She sends you the heart within her breast;  
And what would you have mair?  
And at the fourth kirk o' fair Scotland,  
She bids you meet her there."

"Come hither, all my merry young men,  
And drink the good red wine;  
For we moun on to fair England,  
To free my love from pyne."

At the first kirk o' fair Scotland,  
They gart the bells be rung;  
At the second kirk o' fair Scotland,  
They gart the mass be sung.

At the third kirk o' fair Scotland,  
They dealt gold for her sake;  
And the fourth kirk o' fair Scotland,  
Her true love met them at.

"Set down, set down the corpse," he said,  
"Till I look on the dead."  
The last time that I saw her face,  
She ruddy was and red;

But now alas, and woe is me,  
She's wallowed; like a weed."

He rent the sheet upon her face,  
A little abrook her chin;  
And as soon as Lord William looked theroon,  
Her colour began to come.

She brightened like the lily flour,  
Till her pale colour was gone;  
With rosy cheek, and ruby lip,  
She smil'd her love upon.

"A morsel of your breid, my lord,  
And one glass of your wine;  
For I hae fasted these three lang days,  
All for your sake and mine."

Gae hame, gae hame, my seven bauld brothers!  
Gae hame and blaw the horn!  
I trow ye wad ha' gien me the skaith;  
But I've gien you the scorn."

I cam not here to fair Scotland,  
To lie amang the mool;  
But I cam here to fair Scotland,  
To wear the silks sae weel."

I cam not here to fair Scotland,  
To lie amang the dead;  
But I cam here to fair Scotland,  
To wear the gold sae red."

\* The sea-mew.

† Birch.

‡ Faded.

In a few subsequent articles under the same title, we shall present other specimens of Scottish ballads of the various classes, and finally proceed to advert to the ballads of England, of which we shall also give a few specimens. The series will ultimately embrace what may be called the spirit of British ballad poetry.

#### NANNY WILSON,

A SKETCH FROM REAL LIFE.

NANNY WILSON is one of those industrious, well-behaved women in humble life, who manage to make all ends meet amid the most trying difficulties—difficulties which, we are in the habit of saying, an ordinary mind would shrink from encountering. There are many specimens of this truly honourable character to be met with, but perhaps few more interesting than that before us.

At a very early age, Nanny was left to her own resources. Her mother was taken from her by death while she was but a child; and her father, who was rather a dissipated character, shortly after this bereavement disappeared from his native town, where he followed the business of flax-dressing, and went no one knew where. The poor girl had no near relations to look after her, and she was indebted to the sympathies of one or two families in the neighbourhood for lodging, food, and clothing. The treatment she received in this way was not invariably kind; and this, perhaps, more than any thing else, impressed her with the strong determination which has clung to her through life, to be dependent only on her own exertions for her support. In her fourteenth year, she was taken into a respectable grocer's family as a servant. In this situation she remained two years, and was a favourite with her master and mistress. One day an old beggar woman, who had never been in the place before, was heard to express her surprise at the system of flax-dressing. "This is what I hae heard auld John Wilson speak about," she said, "but I ne'er saw't before." Some one had the curiosity to ask, "Who is auld John Wilson?" "He's a weaver in Airdrie," she replied. This brief conversation came to our friend Nanny's ears, and she instantly made up her mind to go in search of her father.

For this purpose very little preparation was needed, for it was not much that Nanny had to carry along with her. A little bundle contained all her superfluous clothing; and some shillings in silver, the earnings of her servitude, she hid in her bosom. The distance of Airdrie from her native town was about thirty-six miles. This distance she walked with an anxious heart, for she felt that hers was a sort of wild-goose chase. There might be many John Wilsons in Airdrie; and even should she be so fortunate as find out the John Wilson spoken of by the old beggar woman, he might not be her father after all. Or, perhaps, were this man actually her parent, was she sure that he would acknowledge her when found, seeing that he had been so negligent of her since her infancy? These and many other fears were hers during the journey; but she was a girl of great strength of mind, and not to be driven by idle fears or surmises from an honest purpose. On reaching Airdrie, the first person she accosted was an old man, who stood smoking a pipe at a "laigh door." She said she was a stranger, and would feel obliged to him if he would direct her to where John Wilson, a weaver, lived. It was her own father she addressed, and the recognition was almost mutual. She never had cause to regret the journey; for her father was now a sober, industrious old man, and she resided with him till the day of his death. This event took place when Nanny was in her eighteenth year. Having converted the trifling articles of furniture that belonged to her father, into money, she went back to the grocer, and was cordially received into her former situation.

With this kind family our heroine remained as a domestic for a few years, when she left her situation in order to unite herself to a young man of about her own age, with whom she anticipated the enjoyment of comfort and happiness. Many of her neighbours, and particularly her master and mistress, thought that Nanny had a chance of remaining more comfortable in the capacity of a servant with a well-paid fee; and it might have been better had she listened to the hints thus offered to her. It must not, however, be supposed she had reason to lament having married Richard Paterson. He was an honest, and what is called a well-doing man; but he did not possess the bodily strength necessary for the occupation he followed. His employment was that of a working gardener, and few were known to be so tasteful and neat-handed in the use of his horticultural implements. Richard, or Ritchie, as he was called, was therefore generally well employed, and his trimly-kept cottage was cheered both during summer and winter with humble plenty, and blessed with grateful contentment. Sad to say, however, a time came when Ritchie could no longer pursue his ordinary duties. Having gone forth one severe spring morning to labour, when a frost was in the ground, and a thick moist atmosphere overhead, he caught a rheumatic affection in his legs, which ultimately produced a fixed crookedness of



joint, and he was ere long pronounced a *lameter* for life. This was a dreadful blow to poor Nanny, on whom now devolved the principal duty of providing for the family, and which, without a murmur, or a moment's repining, she did in a small way, to the best of her ability. People talk of trials in families—here was a trial; and here also was heroism. For four years did this industrious creature toil for the subsistence of a decrepid husband and two infant children, yet never did any one hear her utter the voice of complaint.

A time at length arrived when she was in some degree relieved from this excessive burden. Ritchie died, and her two children were about the same period carried off by fever. Nanny was now once more alone in the world—a lone woman, but possessing a stout heart, and a firm reliance on the goodness of that Being who has promised to be the "father of the fatherless and the husband of the widow." Her little plan of subsistence was soon put into execution. Some friendly neighbour hinted to her the propriety of seeking relief from the parish. But she spurned the idea. What! take charity from the public while she had hands to work! Never. She scorned the thought of such meanness, with a virtuous and bitter scorn. "When I apply to the kirk," said she, "it will only be when laid on a bed from age or disease, and when all hope of other relief is gone." With these noble resolutions, Nanny set about her arrangements. She prudently removed to her native town, where she rented a little garret, and spun flax or filled pins for the weavers. It was but little that she could make by this sort of labour, but that little sufficed. The rent of her room was three pounds a-year, and she had meal and coals and butcher meat to pay for besides. Her landlord kindly allotted her a bit of ground, on which she reared potatoes and other vegetables for the pot. She now felt herself, with an ordinary share of health, perfectly independent, and her conduct in every sense of the word was exemplary. She attended church regularly every Sabbath day, and every night in her life she barred her door at nine o'clock, and spent an hour in devotional exercises before retiring to rest. After thus secluding herself for the night, she did not open her door to a human being, unless in cases of great emergency, in which she could assist in assuaging bodily distress. When the whirring of her wheel (her bread-winner) ceased, the neighbours below knew the hour. In the fine summer mornings she was up with the lark, and working in her little garden. She might be seen going from cabbage plant to cabbage plant, tending, watering, and dibbling it up, and she knew almost every green blade in her ground. No weeds were to be seen in the well-tended garden, and the consequence of all this labour was, that her small bed of potatoes were the finest in the parish, and it was just a treat to cast your eyes over her little domain. Since her husband's death, up till the present day, she has gone on in this manner, and she is one of the finest examples perhaps ever met with of poverty commanding respect.

About fourteen years ago, Nanny had a most fortunate windfall. A distant relation—an aunt I believe—of whose existence she was scarcely aware, died, leaving her the sum of forty pounds. This sum of money, which was to her immense, she placed in the nearest provincial bank; and as the rent-day came round, she lifted a pound, or perhaps two, and settled scores with her landlord. By this prudent mode of disbursement, the little fund is not yet exhausted. It has been reduced, as I have learned, to about ten pounds; a sum, however, so small, that the bank people will no longer be troubled with it, and they have handed it over to her, and struck her off their books. This has given her great concern, but a friend has lodged the money for her in a provident saving bank. As she is now bordering upon eighty, it is likely that it will last her time—indeed, she says as much herself; for she takes great care to *taip* it out. Fortunately, she is still able to make her wheel brrr, though not so unintermittently as heretofore; and the fine mornings in June will see her out to the garden plot as usual.

One specimen of her foresight, which is in excellent keeping with her character, may be mentioned. As she has lived through life, ever since she was able to work, without in any way burdening others, so she is resolved that she shall descend into the grave in the same spirit. It is ten years now since she last aired her dead-clothes, which are of her own providing; and she remarked at the time that "nobody should be a penny out o' pocket wi' her funeral."

Her peculiar notions of independence have made her rather jealous of the attentions of her neighbours. No finesse, however delicate, will make her accept a favour; and she is apt to get fretful if too many inquiries are made after her health. A gentleman in a neighbouring town lately sent her a small package of fine biscuit, which he directed in the first place to his sister, who resided in Nanny's neighbourhood, to be delivered personally. On calling to deliver her message, the young lady was repulsed with, "Hoots awa!—what does he mean?—dis he think I need them?—tak them wi' ye, and dinna fash me wi' sic nonsense." Thus Nanny's love of independence is at times not without a spice of tartness, which is any thing but harmful.

There is surely much to admire in this old woman's conduct and character, and we could wish that her honest spirit of independence were universal. Were it so, we should see misery and degradation less fre-

quently than we do; and poverty, instead of being accounted an evil, would be deemed the reverse. There is no situation in life that may not be sweetened by a ruling passion leading to virtue; and the ruling passion in her case, meets, in any state of society, our most cordial applause. Poverty has its evils, we will allow; but where allied to virtue and self-denial, it is more deserving of respect than any other state of life with which we are acquainted.

## DOMESTIC FLOWERS.

### SECOND ARTICLE.

THE choice of domestic flowers is, like every thing else, much a matter of caprice; but the genuine admirer of flowers is pleased with every kind: there is a simplicity in the taste of the true lover of nature which can scarcely be cloyed. Thus, the mosses on the dry summit of a wall, with their soft green velvety fibrils, their cup-shaped seed-vessels of various forms and colours, and their enduring verdure, while the rest of the vegetable world is either frozen up by the chills of winter, or withered by the glare of summer, are objects to him of never-failing delight. We have seen a few rude stones and rocks gathered together, strewn with a little earth, and planted with all the simple flowers of the neighbouring mountains, display a more beautiful and interesting combination of vegetation, than the most laboured parterre, or the ten thousand pound tulip beds of the extravagant Dutchman. We would with as much pleasure take a June walk on the Pentland Hills, where the simple yellow tormentillas and potentillas rear their modest and humble leaflets, where the purple euphrasia and wild thyme tinge the green carpet of the turf, and where the deep green shrubby leaves of the cranberry, crowberry, and various other alpine plants, spring with all the freshness and vigour of nature, as in the famed gardens of the Hesperides, with all their golden and glittering fruits.

Yet we by no means despise exotics, or think lightly of their culture. They are beautiful in themselves, and bring to our minds ideas of lands which we may never know but from description. They are not without their associations too; and we recollect that a friend, who had crossed many a wide sea, told us that he never fancied himself so far from home, as when his eye first met our most choice and delicate geraniums growing in wild profusion in hedges and by the wayside in a foreign land. We are not very old, and yet we have seen strange revolutions in the fashionable world of flowers—nearly as strange and capricious as in the fashionable taste for popular airs. Some flowers have had their day, and are now almost forgotten. The race of geraniums were the only favourites in vogue for a long time; they are now less esteemed, although they have the singular good fortune to be even yet a sort of general favourite. They are easily reared, require a light soil, not a great deal of water, and will bear a strong sun. They are pretty, too, both leaves and blossoms, and have a sweet fragrance. Their branches should be pruned, especially the old ones; all withered leaves should be lopped off, and a few supports placed so as to divide and spread out the branches. The *hyderengia* was once a prodigious favourite; it has a splendid flower, which varies its hue from purple to yellow and pink, according to age and its exposure to light. It is a marshy plant, as its name, compounded of the Greek word for water, implies; it accordingly requires an abundant supply of moisture. But, like an air that has got into the mouths of the vulgar, and meets your ear in every dissonance of tone, through every lane or alley, till you positively become disgusted with what is otherwise beautiful, so the *hyderengia*, by meeting your eye, passing out from the spout of broken teapot or side of fractured jug, in every window and corner, has ceased to afford your pride, or even your taste, any gratification. From being a hothouse or parlour-window plant, too, it has, alas! like every discarded favourite, suffered sad indignities, and has been consigned to the garden-border in the open air, where, if the situation be not mild and genial, it languishes through the spring and summer, and not unfrequently is pinched to death by the winter cold.

Then came the *fuschia*, to live its day of notoriety. This, too, is a beautiful plant, with depending blossoms of a scarlet hue, like the modern ear-rings of a first-rate fashionable. A little fortune, we believe, was made by the first introducer of this plant into our houses. He was a gardener in the neighbourhood of London, and obtained a slip of the plant by some means or other: this slip grew to a goodly shrub, which he kept in concealment; but planting slips from it in pots, he one day happened to catch the attention of a fashionable lady; she carried one of the plants with her to London, and from this time guineas flowed in upon the lucky gardener as fast and even faster than he could supply flowers. The *fuschia* still retains its place, although it can only now figure in the provinces as a star of fashion. It also will grow in the open air, if the situation be warm and genial. To it has succeeded the splendid *camelias*, with their large rose-like blossoms and leaves of a beautiful deep green, and the whole family of Cape heaths, which show in

their bell-shaped flowers such a diversity of delicate colours. Nor must we here forget that humble though universal favourite, the *mignonette*, which recommends itself by its delicious odour, and by the ease with which it springs up wherever planted. In order to have an early supply of this sweet-smelling flower, it is necessary to sow the seeds in February or March, in a box which is to be placed under a cucumber bed, moderately heated, or in a room where the sun shines directly upon it. After it has so far grown up, it must be gradually exposed to the external air, as it then begins to give out its odour, which is so far repressed if the plants be confined to the house. *Mignonette* endures to the last days of autumn, and diffuses its fragrance to the very close of its existence, like a wise and good man who is full of beneficence and wisdom to the last.

There is a flower we cannot omit naming—the flower of flowers—which no caprice of fashion can ever alienate from our affections: we mean the rose. Under whatever hue, or in whatever situation, it always delights us. Other flowers may be reckoned gaudy, vulgar, unseasonable, but the rose can never come wrong. In mirth or sadness, it is congenial to our taste; we crown the bride or smiling infant with it, or place it on the cold bier of the departed loved one. Its fragrance has been compared to virtue, even grateful after it has died. Nothing can be more delicate than the China or monthly rose, with its pale flesh-coloured waxen hue; and nothing more delightful than to watch the successive monthly evolution of its buds and blossoms. These roses will not thrive well in the smoke of a city, but in clear sheltered places they require but little management to keep them ever springing. A soil of withered leaves, and a moderate supply of moisture, with occasional pruning, and a change of earth, are the requisites for their luxuriant growth. They also require a south or sunny exposure. Sometimes small green insects appear on them (called *aphis*), which indicate that they are unhealthy, and require a change of soil, or pruning of the roots and branches.

A question has often been asked, Are plants healthful or deleterious in our apartments? This question is easily answered. In moderate quantities, they are conducive to the purity of the air; in excess, they are deleterious. And the reason of this is easily explained. There is a constant and beautiful interchange taking place between the animal and vegetable world, by which the atmosphere, otherwise encroached upon in its composition by both, is kept in a state of regular and exact proportion. Animals consume a portion of oxygen, and throw out an excess of carbonic acid; while plants, on the whole, are found to consume this excess of the latter, and to give out a portion of the former. In this way, then, a few plants or flowers in a room produce a beneficial effect; but as, during the night, they give out an excess of carbonic acid, their bad effects, when in bedrooms, especially close and ill-aired ones, may be very serious.

It is a curious fact, too, that the presence and action of vegetable or animal life prevents putrefaction taking place. Thus, if you place on a jar of water a few of those little green seed-looking plants called duckweed, which float about without any attachment on the surface of ditches, this water will be preserved sweet for a long period, whereas a few days would have otherwise rendered it a mass of putrefaction. Thus, too, small animals, as frogs, fishes, or water insects, in a well, tend to keep the water pure and sweet. Such are the wonderful actions of living things; and a country well cultivated and covered with herbage and corresponding animals, is always more healthy than the dead morass or the barren waste. Some plants even derive a great part of their subsistence from water alone. We have bulbous plants, as the hyacinth, which, when placed in a glass of water, immediately begins to shoot down its tendrils, and to put forth its leaves and blossoms, fed by the pure element and the air alone. If we take a few cress or mustard seeds, and strew them on a piece of moist flannel, tied over a cup, we shall soon have a crop of salad; but this vegetation only goes a certain length: the bulbous plants grow as long as there is nourishment in their bulbs, and in the cotyledons or seed-lobes of the cresses; but when this is extracted, they cease to make progress. There are probably few plants that live on the abstemious fare of water and air alone. One set of plants by their decay form the soil for the growth of others; and thus the earth becomes a chemical bed, as it were, whence springs fresh verdure and organisation out of the old materials of decay and corruption. Hence it will be understood how decayed leaves form the best mould for flower-pots, as the soil is in fact a mixture of such materials, joined with the dust of rocks, such as clay and lime.

We need scarcely give any hints to our fair readers on the manner of placing and grouping their domestic flowers; this we leave to their individual good tastes. A common stand for flowers is a frame with shelves, rising one above the other like the steps of a stair. This is a very convenient way of disposing flower-pots, but care should be taken not to crowd too many together, as the middle ones, being confined and stinted of air, will soon fade and die. Free air is as necessary to plants as to animals; and for this purpose, in mild weather, the window should be moderately raised. There is a very simple and easy mode of commanding a basket of flowers at any particular spot in a garden, or lawn, or verandah, as you may choose. Take a

strong wicker basket, and fill it up with earth; then carefully dig up as many flowers with a ball of earth attached to their roots as will occupy the surface of the basket, and plant them in the earth; by keeping them in a shaded spot for a day or two, and giving them water, their growth or freshness will not be interrupted; and this basket may be carried about and placed wherever it is thought best. If the basket be painted of a green, or any other colour, it will improve its appearance, and make it last for a couple of years, or even more.

Flowers, when severed from their stems to be placed in vases of water, should be cut clean and smooth, and the water changed once a-day. A little sand, or common mould, packed into a flat vessel, and well moistened in water, forms an excellent means of preserving the fresh bloom of flowers; and in this way, by cutting the stems very short, they may be arranged with great taste. To preserve flowers in a dried state, stalk those that you wish to keep, containing a stalk, with the blossom, leaves, and stem, and, if a small plant, the root; place these within two folds of common paper, and press them at first gently with a book; then, next day, add a few more books to increase the pressure; and if the flower be large and moist, change the paper. In a week, they are generally quite dry, when they may be pasted with a little gum or glue on a sheet of white paper, and named below, with the date of flowering and place where they grew.

#### BIOGRAPHIC SKETCHES.

##### CERVANTES.

HOWEVER numerous and excellent the writers of any land may be, there is always some one commanding spirit, who holds the first place in the love and esteem of his countrymen, and is chosen by them on all occasions of comparison, as the best and noblest representative of the national genius. Such a spirit was Shakespeare to England, Dante to Italy, and Cervantes to Spain.

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, the author of *Don Quixote*, was born in the year 1547, at Alcalá de Henares, a town in the province of Andalusia. He was descended of an ancient but decayed family, and was the youngest of four children. His parents do not appear to have been able to give him an education of the highest order, though, in consequence of his being well advanced in years before attaining to distinction, this and other circumstances of his early life are but imperfectly known. It is believed, however, that he had the advantage of two years' attendance at the schools of Salamanca; and it is certain, that, when about the age of twenty, he studied grammar and polite letters at Madrid, under the tuition of an ecclesiastic, named Juan Lopez de Hoyos. This priest had been appointed to prepare the elegiac compositions in honour of the obsequies of the deceased queen, Isabella of Valois, and his pupils were called upon to assist him in the task. Among these Cervantes particularly distinguished himself; and this is almost the only incident of his youth which has been authentically recorded. It proves that at one period of his early life he enjoyed the opportunities of polite education; but the mind of Miguel was destined to receive a harder training, and discipline more severe, in the school of stern adversity.

Cervantes left Spain, in early life, for Rome, where he served in the humble capacity of valet-de-chambre to Julio Aquaviva y Aragón, who had been envoy from the Pope to Madrid, and in that city, it is supposed, had observed, and been attracted by, the talents of the young Spaniard. In this situation Cervantes did not remain long. He entered as a private soldier into the Spanish corps, then serving in Italy, which shortly after was called into active service both by sea and land. The Turks at that period had not entirely lost the warlike spirit and love of conquest which first brought them into Europe, and with the assistance of their piratical dependencies on the African coasts, they waged habitual wars for the possession of Cyprus, and other Mediterranean islands, then belonging to the state of Venice. In a time of profound peace they laid siege to Cyprus, and a combined Venetian and Spanish fleet was equipped to relieve the island. Cervantes was on board of the fleet, which suffered so much from tempests on its first putting to sea, that in that year nothing was effected. In the year following, 1571, the celebrated League was concluded between the Pope, the king of Spain, and the state of Venice, against the Turkish power. Immediately afterwards, a larger fleet put to sea, and after relieving Corfu, encountered, on the 7th of October, the armada of Turkey.

Cervantes, at this important moment, was labouring under a severe attack of fever, and was entreated by his captain and comrades to refrain from taking any part in the approaching contest. But this first trial of our hero proved what a noble and courageous heart beat in his bosom. He replied to his comrades, that he would rather fall, fighting for his God and his king, than shrink under cover in the hour of battle. He at the same time prevailed upon the captain to place him in the post of greatest danger, and in the victorious contest that ensued, his bravery animated

his countrymen so highly, that they alone cut off five hundred of the enemy, and captured the flagship of Alexandria, with its commander on board, and the royal standard of Egypt. Cervantes purchased his share of this day's glory at the expense of several wounds, one of which disabled his left arm for life. Yet in after years he warmed at the remembrance of this signal victory, and declared his wounds to be a small price for a share in its honour.

After recovering from his wounds, Miguel again joined the combined fleets in the Levant, and was present in the expedition against Tunis. That city was captured and garrisoned, but was, soon after the departure of the naval forces, retaken by the Turks. Again the Christian fleet set sail for Africa, but was repelled from the coasts by storms, with such violence as to be forced for shelter into the ports of Sicily. In this country Cervantes remained till the summer of 1575, when he obtained leave to revisit his native land, after a period of service of six years, during which time he had visited, in the course of his duty, the chief cities of Italy, and had stored his powerful mind with those observations of men and manners, which were destined to be the delight of all succeeding times.

From the viceroy of Sicily, and from Don John of Austria, commander of the expeditions in which Cervantes had served, the latter received commendatory letters, pointing him out to the king of Spain as a brave and approved soldier, and a proper person to be entrusted with the command of one of the companies raising in Spain for the Italian service. If we recollect the humble station of him who received these commendations, we may conceive how high the deservings must have been that called them forth. But unforeseen misfortunes rendered them of no avail. The vessel in which Cervantes embarked, with his brother Rodrigo, the companion of his campaigns, was attacked by three Algerine corsairs, a portion of a squadron under the command of a pirate captain, Dali Mami. After a desperate action, in which Miguel behaved with his accustomed bravery, the Christian vessel was captured. The prisoners were conveyed to Algiers, and, on their division into lots, Cervantes fell to the share of the captain, who, on discovering the commendatory letters which his captive carried, immediately set him down as a person of distinction, and treated him with the utmost harshness, in expectation of exciting a desire to liberate himself by means of ransom.

Though loaded with chains and surrounded by a guard, Cervantes soon found means to prevail on a Moor, in whom he put confidence, to assist in a plan of escape. Accompanied by his fellow captives—for without their participation in it, freedom was not desired by Cervantes—he contrived to escape from the city; but being abandoned on the first day of their march by the Moor, the whole party were obliged to return to their slavery, which was only rendered doubly rigorous by the attempt. In the following year, 1576, some of the companions of our hero were ransomed, and through them he dispatched letters to his family, acquainting them with the wretched condition of his brother Rodrigo and himself. His father, on receipt of the melancholy tidings, pledged all his effects, and sent the proceeds to Algiers, to ransom his sons. The sum was insufficient, however, to redeem them both; and, as might have been expected from the noble character of Cervantes, he remained a captive, and Rodrigo was freed. Indeed, so high an opinion was entertained by the captain Dali Mami of the maimed and wasted Spanish soldier, that no ransom but an exorbitant one would have been accepted for him.

His brother Rodrigo's departure afforded Cervantes an opportunity of planning another escape for his companions and himself from the hands of their tyrannical masters. Among the captives were several men of family and distinction, and from them Rodrigo carried letters to Spain, containing directions for sending, at a certain period, a vessel to a stated point of the Algerine coast, where the Christian prisoners would be ready to embark. The scheme by which Miguel hoped to make this vessel the instrument of their freedom, was founded on the friendship of an old Spanish slave, who held the post of gardener in an establishment about three miles from the city. Juan, which was the gardener's name, had by Cervantes' direction prepared a cave in the most secret part of the garden under his care. Captive after captive contrived to escape from their masters, and found in this cave refuge and concealment. Ultimately, fifteen or sixteen were thus assembled, and were supported by the friendship of the gardener and the contrivances of Cervantes, who exposed his life incessantly in visiting and encouraging them; for, in order to serve them more efficiently, he did not leave his own master till within a few days of the period when the vessel was expected. It is difficult to conceive how Cervantes accomplished all this, unless we suppose that the suspicions of his master were asleep, and more latitude by this time allowed to the prisoners.

The Spanish vessel arrived, at the time which had been appointed, off the Algerine coast, and the crew attempted to effect a landing; but being descried by some Moors in a fishing boat, and an alarm being given, they became afraid of the consequences, and bore off for the time. On a second attempt, their vessel was attacked and captured, and every man on board carried prisoners to Algiers. The inhabitants

of the cave, ignorant of what had happened, were consoling themselves meanwhile with the cheering hope of a speedy release; but the treachery of a Christian slave, named the Gilder, who was privy to the plot, put an end to the agreeable delusion. This man, who had first renounced Christianity and then returned to it, resolved once more to embrace the Mahometan faith, and, in order to obtain favour with the governor of the city, Hassan Pacha, revealed to him the secret of the cave. The pacha received the intelligence with delight, for, by the law of the country, the captives were forfeited to him. A party was sent to the garden, and the Christians, unsuspecting of any attack, were easily mastered. In the confusion of the moment, Cervantes found an opportunity of requesting his companions to look to their own safety by throwing the whole blame upon him; and while chains were placed on the limbs of the captives, he calmly and solemnly addressed the party of Turks, and declared that he alone was the author and conductor of the enterprise. On this being narrated to the pacha, he ordered the rest of the captives to be confined in his baths, and Cervantes to be brought before him. Neither threats nor artifice sufficed to induce the high-minded Spaniard to compromise any as his accomplice, and the pacha, wearied out by his firmness, contented himself with appropriating the greater part of the Christian prisoners. Nothing but the expectation of large ransoms saved the unhappy beings from the punishment of immediate death, though the slavery and cruelty they were condemned to endure in the baths of Hassan, brought many of them ultimately to a barbarous end. Speaking of these sufferings, Cervantes himself says, "Although we suffered from hunger and nakedness at times, and in fact almost always, yet nothing distressed us so much as the unheard-of cruelties of our master towards the Christians. Every day he hanged one, impaled another, cut off the ears of a third, and for such trivial causes, or so entirely without reason, that the Turks admitted that it was merely from pleasure at the sight of human suffering, and because nature made him for a butcher of human kind."

Cervantes, though chained for months almost under the eye of this tyrant, found means to dispatch a letter to Don Martin de Cordoba, desiring him to send some trusty person to the city of Algiers, with whom the captives might communicate and organise a plan of escape. The bearer of the letter was seized almost at the moment of accomplishing his commission, and three Christian lives fell a sacrifice to the revenge of the pacha. The name of Cervantes was subscribed to the letter, and he was ordered to receive three thousand strokes. Strange to say, such was the respect entertained even by the barbarians for his courage and his talents, that, on strong intercession, this punishment was remitted. The command Miguel had over his companions, many of them of knightly rank, appears to have kept up in the minds of his tyrants an impression of his great consequence, and to have saved him from a cruel fate, on this and other occasions.

The next scheme formed by our hero, for slavery never tamed his ardent spirit, was to escape by the aid of a renegade Spaniard, named Giron, on whose mind he wrought so strongly as to excite an earnest desire to be reconciled to the Catholic church. Giron procured from a Spanish merchant in the city a sum of money, with which a twelve-oared galley was purchased and fitted out for sea. Cervantes had prepared seventy of the principal captives to be ready for embarking, when once more the plan was frustrated by the treachery of an ill-disposed individual, who betrayed the whole to the pacha. The latter waited for the purpose of seizing the Christians in the very attempt, but a whisper of treachery spread abroad among the captives. The merchant who had supplied the money, became alarmed, and offered to ransom and ship off Cervantes, lest his own participation in the affair should become known. But the noble captive declined freedom without his companions, and assured the merchant that no tortures should wring a betrayal from his lips. Miguel had fled from his master, and was at this time in concealment, when a proclamation denouncing the punishment of death against all who should secrete him, induced him for the sake of his friends to give himself up. With a rope around his neck, and his hands tied behind him, he stood before the pacha, and calmly declared that he alone, with the help of four other gentlemen who had since been ransomed, had conceived the enterprise, and that no other captive was to have known of it till the moment for its execution arrived. The result was, that he was thrown into a dungeon, and vigilantly guarded; the pacha declaring, that, if he could keep a good watch over that maimed Spaniard, he should think his capital and himself secure.

The sufferings of the prisoners were much increased about this period by the general scarcity of provisions at Algiers. But the hour of ransom was now at hand. The Spanish government sent two priests to treat for the liberation of the captives, and these commissioners arrived with money from the mother and sister of Cervantes, to the amount of three hundred ducats. Great difficulty was found in negotiating his release; for the pacha, being about to sail for Constantinople, had actually put him on board of one of the vessels, when father Gil, one of the commissioners, moved with pity, paid the greater part of the exorbitant sum demanded as a ransom. Before leaving Algiers, Cer-



vantes prevailed on the commission to institute an inquiry into his conduct, on which some malevolent persons endeavoured to throw imputations, which, if unchecked and carried to Spain, might have prevented his obtaining the reward he expected for his former services. The issue of the inquiry was in the highest degree honourable to him, as a man, a soldier, and a Christian, and the commissioners treated him subsequently with the greatest respect, consulting him on all occasions, with regard to the best means of accomplishing the purposes of their mission.

Notwithstanding all the hardships he had suffered, Miguel had not been a year restored to his native country, when he engaged, along with his brother Rodrigo, in the naval expedition against Portugal. In all the victories gained by his countrymen over the Portuguese, up to the year 1583, he bore a share, and uniformly distinguished himself. After the reduction of Terceira, he resided for some time at Oran with his comrades, though for what length of time is not known.

Hitherto Cervantes had appeared only in the light of a brave soldier and suffering captive; he was now to shine forth as one of the finest wits of any age or country, though destined never to receive during his life the consideration or rewards due to his merit and genius. In the year 1584, he published his *Galatea*, a pastoral, the principal character of which was a portrait of a lady of noble family in Esquivias, whom he shortly after married. The dramatic literature of Spain was at this period coming into high repute, and at Madrid, where he had now taken up his residence, Cervantes produced about thirty comedies, all of which were well received; but Lope de Vega, the great dramatist of his country, soon eclipsed all his contemporaries in this department. The associations or academies which began about this period in the Italian cities, were imitated at the court of Madrid, and generally met at the house of some distinguished person. Hernan Cortez, for example, held a meeting of this kind in his mansion, of which it is supposed Cervantes was a member.

Finding after some time that no reward was forthcoming for his military services and hardships, and that the stage afforded a very insufficient maintenance, Cervantes accepted a small office in the commissariat service at Seville, his duty being that of purveyor to the Indian vessels and fleets. Though this was a very unproductive employment, he expected by means of it to get the earliest information of vacant posts in the Indies. On applying, however, to the court for one of these, he met with a refusal, and appears to have given up the prospect for the future. His occupation at this time led him through all the towns and villages of Andalusia, and he stored his mind with the manners, customs, and incidents which were afterwards so graphically depicted in his works. About this time, also, he gained a prize for a poem in praise of a saint, called San Jacinto, who, at the solicitation of the king of Poland, had been canonised by the Pope, Clement VIII.

In the year 1596, when about fifty years of age, he became involved in the bankruptcy of a Seville merchant, to whom he had entrusted a considerable portion of the funds collected by him in the course of his employment, receiving, in return, an obligation for the amount on Madrid. In this transaction Cervantes was only blameable, perhaps, for want of foresight; but though the transaction brought no loss ultimately to the government, he did not remain long in his office, or in Seville. Many of his tales, as that of Pinocette and Cortadillo, two famous robbers, are the result of his observation of the customs and inhabitants of Seville.

For four years subsequent to his departure from this city, nothing is known of him. The publication of the great work on which his fame is chiefly founded, was now at hand. It is certain, from his own account, that the first part of Don Quixote was composed in prison, though where, or for what reason, he was confined, has not been ascertained. The Spanish court had removed from Madrid to Valladolid, and here Cervantes took up his abode, previous to the publication of Don Quixote, for which he received the royal printing licence. It is said, that, in order to give the work a stronger chance of public favour, he determined on the dedication of it to some great man. To the Duke of Bejar he accordingly applied, but that nobleman was unwilling to agree to the proposition, until Cervantes read over one chapter, when the duke most willingly accepted the dedication. This is truly an example of the immortal doing homage to the mortal; the party then conferring the favour and honour being now only known by his slight connection with the party to whom the honour appeared to be done. On its first publication, the work seems to have been for a time overlooked, as the author found it necessary to issue anonymously a small pamphlet explanatory of its aim and purpose. In truth, the very fineness of the satire caused the work to be at first a little misunderstood. But this obstacle to its circulation and its fame appears rapidly to have melted away, for, in the first year of its publication, four editions of it were printed. These were speedily followed by numerous translations into all the principal European languages. In consequence of the ridicule thrown by this admirable production on the extravagant tales of knight-errantry, the writers in that branch of literature, who were then exceedingly numerous, made its author an object of persecution. One of the few occasions on which Cervantes was noticed by the court, was at the

baptism of Philip IV., when our author was ordered to draw up an account of the ceremonial rejoicings, which he did to the general satisfaction. About the same time, his peace and that of his family was disturbed by a melancholy event. A young knight of St Jago, Don Gaspar de Expeleta, being badly wounded in a scuffle, took refuge in the house of Cervantes, where he soon after died. As the deceased had been a suitor of one of the ladies of the family, some suspicion arose respecting the cause of his death, and the novelist, his sister, niece, and natural daughter, were consequently thrown into prison. Their innocence being speedily made clear, they were liberated.

In 1606, the court returned to Madrid, and was followed thither by Cervantes, who now devoted himself to a retired and philosophical life, preparing and publishing a great number of tales and other writings. He had become old, and was not in very easy circumstances. In 1614, an attempt was made by a contemporary writer to foist on the public a second part of Don Quixote, under the pretence of its being the work of Cervantes; but the appearance of a second part from the true and inimitable pen, speedily undeceived the public. Every composition of our author was received with delight by the world, with the exception of his poetry, the rejection of which is said to have mortified him in no small degree. The republication of his several works, with the occasional production of new pieces, which need not be enumerated here, appears to have occupied him closely, though amid privations and ill health, up to the period of his decease, which took place in 1616, on the 23d of April, the same day in which the spirit of our own Shakespeare took its flight from earth. Thus, in one day the world lost two of its brightest lights, the one the most comprehensive genius, as the other was perhaps the brightest wit, that ever appeared to delight and instruct mankind. Of the works of Cervantes, this is not the proper place to speak; but in concluding even so short a sketch, we may be allowed to say, that his great production, Don Quixote, obtains little justice if read only as a narrative of extravagant adventure: around the whole of this work there is an atmosphere of mingled sagacity and humour, tenderness and burlesque, for which no parallel can be shown in the literature of any nation.

#### DANTZIC.

DANTZIC, which once formed one of the principal Hanse Towns, but is now comprehended within the dominions of the Prussian monarchy, is situated on the river Vistula, near its entrance into the south side of the Baltic sea, and is generally reckoned the second city in the north of Europe—Petersburg being the first.

By reason of its excellent situation on the Vistula, which gives the means of inland communication to a vast extent of territory in Prussia, Poland, and Hungary, Dantzig forms a great central point for commerce, both import and export. The population is about eighty thousand in number. In the present day, the place is considered one of the strongest and most extensively fortified towns in Europe. As sundry hills inclose the town on the land side, so as completely to command it, the range of defences is necessarily much enlarged, extending for miles around the wall and fosse, which actually encompass the city. In order effectually to man all these distant posts, and to preserve them from a besieging army, a garrison of thirty thousand soldiers is held to be requisite. Even in time of peace, several thousand troops remain in Dantzig, which are kept in the constant drill and exercise so unremittently enforced in the Prussian armies. The town has no longer the appearance of a place of commerce; for although the merchants have their exchange and market-place, the numberless guards of soldiers at every avenue and gate, and in every corner, show how effectual is the thralldom of military possession. The streets, too, are long, narrow, and gloomy, the houses rising on each side to a great height, so that the sun seldom enlivens the inhabitants with its rays. This is indeed generally the case with all fortified towns, where it is an object to cram the natives into as small a compass as possible. The pavement of the streets is of the worst possible description, and, for foot-passengers, positively irksome. If two carriages meet, great precaution is requisite to avoid an encounter, and until the transit be happily accomplished, the pedestrians must seek refuge in the doorways. In rainy and dirty weather the evil is of course much increased, and appears insupportable in the eyes of a person accustomed to the flagged footways of our own cities.

But in spite of all things, soldiers, mud, and pavements, the mystery of enjoying life is as well understood in Dantzig as elsewhere in the world. If the town be gloomy, sorrowful, and grave, it is only the more essential for its inhabitants to seek relief and variety beyond its limits; and numerous are the beautiful spots within a short circuit, to which they flock with mirth and jubilee. In a summer's afternoon the city is depopulated, entire households turning out with an impatience for country air and country dust not to be controlled; and as the soil around is light and arid, it lies pulverised inches deep on the public roads, and when the tide of emigration sets fairly out, columns

of dust extend themselves in every direction, and with incredible rapidity cover each adventurer with a whitened layer, whilst the finer particles gently insinuate themselves into eyes, mouth, nose, and ears, until the garment and the physiognomy become equally undistinguishable. But this is a drawback to entire fruition, which is little heeded. When the peaceful shade is gained, and the party seated around the tea-board, the evils that are passed enhance the pleasures that are in being, and the parched throat receives with the greater zest the refreshing beverage.

One of the most interesting places about Dantzig, and where nature has been most admirably seconded by art, is Oliva, the seat of the bishop, and round which is an extensive garden laid out in very beautiful style. Here the public are admitted under certain restrictions; and as it contains some finely shaded walks, it is a favourite lounge of the worthy Dantzickers. Next to the bishop's garden, which, in the eyes of the burghers of Dantzig, is not to be equalled in the known world, the hill of Oliva is famous and renowned. It is a lofty and precipitous eminence, whence a prospect of great extent stretches on every side. The country far away into the interior, in all its rich variety, is behind, and the Bay of Dantzig, with the deep sea beyond, is full in front. The town itself, with all its frowning battlements and high steeples, forms an object in the landscape not less interesting from being in a plain interspersed with pretty villages and cultivated gardens. Fahrwasser and its crowded harbour give another feature to the scene; and when the day is calm and lovely, and the surface of the water is covered with fishing boats and various craft, the mind is almost led to doubt, with the Dantzickers themselves, that the boasted beauties of the Bay of Naples are not altogether unequalled. The chief place of summer resort, however, is the bathing place of Zoppot, a large village about six miles from the town. As it is built in no settled form, but straggles down from the hills to the edge of the sea, the intermingling of white cottages with trees and flowers gives it a pretty and picturesque aspect. In the summer season it is crowded with the families of the citizens of Dantzig, and being in its way rather a celebrated place, it is generally graced with the presence of many noble families from Poland and the country round. A large community is thus formed, which disposes itself to pursue health with a considerable admixture of pleasure and recreation; and therefore, in the bathing season, a constant run of balls and concerts is kept up for the enlivenment of society. In these assemblies little of that constraint or severe etiquette is maintained which often renders ballrooms so insipid, where the pride of birth or the pomposity of wealth arrogates a vain precedence. Here a countess will be seen dancing with a plain burgher from the city, with as much frankness as if he possessed a title, and were decorated with a star and ribbon.

Not the least interesting circumstance connected with Dantzig, consists in its being the chief depôt for the export of grain from northern Europe. Rye being universally used both by rich and poor in this part of the world—not so much from compulsion as choice—wheat is raised almost entirely for exportation, and it is to Dantzig, by means of the Vistula, that the vast stores of this material are sent for disposal by the landowners and farmers in Prussia, Poland, and adjacent territories. Mr Jacob, the intelligent traveller in search of information relative to the continental corn districts, thus describes the mode of bringing grain to Dantzig, and storing it for use. "There are (says he) two modes of conveying wheat to Dantzig by the Vistula. That which grows near the lower parts of the river, comprehending Polish Russia, and part of the province of Plock, and of Masovia, in the kingdom of Poland, which is generally of an inferior quality, is conveyed in covered boats, with shifting boards that protect the cargo from the rain, but not from pilfering. These vessels are long, and draw about fifteen inches water, and bring about one hundred and fifty quarters of wheat. They are not, however, so well calculated for the upper parts of the river. From Cracow, where the Vistula first becomes navigable, to below the junction of the Bug with that stream, the wheat is mostly conveyed to Dantzig in open flats. These are constructed on the banks, in seasons of leisure, on spots far from the ordinary reach of the water, but which, when the rains of autumn, or the melted snow of the Carpathian mountains in the spring, fill and overflow the river, are easily floated.

Barges of this description are about seventy-five feet long, and twenty broad, with a depth of two and a half feet. They are made of fir, rudely put together, fastened with wooden trenails, the corners dovetailed and secured with slight iron clamps—the only iron employed in their construction. A large tree, the length of the vessel, runs along the bottom, to which the timbers are secured. This roughly cut keelson rises nine or ten inches from the floor, and hurdles are laid on it, which extend to the sides. They are covered with mats made of rye straw, and serve the purpose of dunnage; leaving below a space in which the water that leaks through the sides and bottom is received. The bulk is kept from the sides and ends of the barge by a similar plan. The water which these ill constructed and imperfectly caulked vessels receive, is dipped out at the end and sides of the bulk of wheat. Vessels of this description draw from ten to twelve inches water, and yet they frequently get aground in descending the river. The cargoes usually

consist of from one hundred and eighty to two hundred quarters of wheat. The wheat is thrown on the mats, piled as high as the gunwale, and left uncovered, exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather, and to the pilfering of the crew. During the passage, the barge is carried along by the force of the stream, oars being merely used at the head and stern, to steer clear of the sand-banks, which are numerous and shifting, and to direct the vessel in passing under the several bridges. These vessels are conducted by six or seven men. A small boat precedes with a man in it, who is employed sounding, in order to avoid the shifting shoals. This mode of navigating is necessarily very slow; and during the progress of it, which lasts several weeks and even months, the rain, if any fall, soon causes the wheat to grow, and the vessel assumes the appearance of a floating meadow. The shooting of the fibres soon forms a thick mat, and prevents the rain from penetrating more than an inch or two. The main bulk is protected by this kind of covering, and when that is thrown aside, is found in tolerable condition. The vessels are broken up at Dantzic, and usually sell for about two-thirds of their original cost. The men who conduct them return on foot.

When the cargo arrives at Dantzic or Elbing, all but the grown surface is thrown on the land, spread abroad, exposed to the sun, and frequently turned over, till any slight moisture it may have imbibed is dried. If a shower of rain falls, as well as during the night, the heaps of wheat on the shore are thrown together in the form of a steep roof of a house, that the rain may run off, and are covered with a linen cloth. It is thus frequently a long time after the wheat has reached Dantzic, before it is fit to be placed in the warehouses. The warehouses are very well adapted for storing corn. They consist generally of seven stories, three of which are in the roof. The floors are about nine feet asunder. Each of them is divided by perpendicular partitions, the whole length, about four feet high, by which different parcels are kept distinct from each other. Thus the floors have two divisions, each of them capable of storing from one hundred and fifty to two hundred quarters of wheat, and leaving sufficient space for turning and screening it. There are abundance of windows on each floor, which are always thrown open in dry weather to ventilate the corn. It is usually turned over three times a-week. The men who perform the operation throw it with their shovels as high as they can, and thus the grains are separated from each other, and exposed to the drying influence of the air.

The whole of the corn warehouses now left (for many were burnt during the siege of 1814) are capable of storing five hundred thousand quarters of wheat, supposing the quarters to be large enough to fill each of the two divisions of the floors with a separate heap; but as of late years it has come down from Poland in smaller parcels than formerly, and of more various qualities, which must of necessity be kept distinct, the present stock of about two hundred and eighty thousand quarters is found to occupy nearly the whole of those warehouses which are in repair, or are advantageously situated for loading the ships. Ships are loaded by gangs of porters with great dispatch, who will complete a cargo of five hundred quarters in about three or four hours."

#### EDUCATION—STUDY OF CHEMISTRY.

BY DR D. B. REID.  
Concluding Article.

A SUFFICIENT amount of information in those branches of science which are most useful and interesting, may be easily communicated in a course of thirty or forty lessons: and if these be given for one hour each successive week, they cannot to any extent interfere with the ordinary business of education. And if, during each successive session, a series of lessons in each of the more important sciences be given, the mind of the pupil will become slowly and gradually alive to all the more interesting phenomena of nature and processes of art; whereas he who has not enjoyed such opportunities will pass them by unnoticed, comparatively insensible and regardless of the properties which the Author of nature has impressed upon the material creation. But it may be asked, who are to be the teachers in this new course? To confine ourselves at present to chemistry, with the assistance of a text-book, the performance of the more important elementary illustrative experiments will not be difficult to any of those numerous teachers whose zeal and intelligence may lead them to engage in this cause. Several have already tried it, and have publicly announced their intention of continuing it in their schools and academies; and I have not yet met with any intelligent teacher who, even after no more than a week's training in the laboratory, found any difficulty in introducing the more simple illustrations of chemical science, amply sufficient to lay a sure foundation for the future progress of the pupils, and to excite a lively interest in scientific pursuits. With an expenditure not exceeding five or ten pounds, every schoolmaster might be provided with all the apparatus absolutely necessary to give a considerable range of experimental

illustration; and where a few pounds more are expended, all the pupils in a school, to the number of fifty or a hundred, might be taught to perform experiments themselves, by using the flat glass apparatus, and operating upon a small scale. Nor is it essentially necessary that the teacher should attend a course of practical instruction in science. If he live in a remote situation, let him study with care the experiments which can be performed without any troublesome manipulation, and he will find that these are sufficiently interesting to form a basis for the varied explanations that may be required in an introductory course of familiar illustrations to his pupils; nothing, however, would be of greater practical importance than the institution of normal schools or public boards, where all who intend to introduce scientific subjects in their schools and academies, might have an opportunity of examining in detail the apparatus which may be required, and of being assisted in acquiring the art of performing the necessary illustrative experiments.

Though a complete and extended course of chemical experiments can be given only where the proper facilities for operating are to be met with, the introduction of a system of testing and operating upon a small scale, as a means of facilitating the progress of the student, is of the greatest practical importance. He who provides himself with a few slips of glass, a few phials with acids and alkalies, and a small quantity of fifty or sixty of the more important chemical preparations—all of which, both apparatus and materials, he can procure for five or six shillings at the utmost—not only provides himself with a small museum to which he can continually refer, but can also perform, again and again, with a part of the materials, several thousand experiments. He can moreover renew them, at his own convenience, whenever it may be desirable; he can study them leisurely at home with his text-book before him, and repeat those which may be more complicated, till he becomes familiar with them.

The small museums of tests and specimens, prepared by Mr Macfarlane of Edinburgh, are arranged in the manner I have recommended. They contain about sixty specimens of the most important chemical preparations, including a few phials with acids and alkalies, a test tube, slips of flat glass, filtering paper, and test paper. These alone, independent of the larger and more complete portable laboratories and chemical test boxes, cannot fail to be of the highest value to the student of chemistry. I do not hesitate to affirm, that he who provides himself with such specimens, and learns the method of operating with flat glass, will acquire, by frequently testing his materials at home, an available knowledge of the science, and a specific recollection of the leading truths it presents, which he who contents himself with what he sees in the class-room, can never attain. However important the demonstrations and exercises there may be, still the student is too often apt to imagine that he is perfectly familiar with the subject, because he can follow the connected exposition given by the teacher; but when he begins alone, and is left entirely to his own resources at home, then he soon finds out what he does know and what he does not, and is put in the train of mentioning his difficulties to his teacher, and paying a more close attention to every thing that is brought before him.

In using these materials, each of the sixty specimens can be exposed on the flat glass to the action of heat, of water, of acids, of alkalies, and of each other; so that, before entering upon any complicated mixture, the student can easily try thousands of experiments. If any one contrast the progress of a student who has been accustomed to operate in this manner, with that of another who has never availed himself of this means of information, who has only seen a specimen in a museum or lecture-room, instead of having the opportunity of recurring to it, and operating with it as often as he may wish, he will at once perceive the benefit that accompanies this frequent repetition of experiments on the small scale, each of which may present phenomena as palpably to the eye as they are observed in the demonstrations of the lecture-room. Those who have not witnessed the amount of instructive and interesting experiments which can be performed by all the pupils in any school or academy, with the most simple means, where hundreds may be operating at the same moment, cannot appreciate the zeal and enthusiasm with which the students enter upon the experimental department, the practical benefit which they derive from such instruction, and the mental training which necessarily accompanies it. Nor is it a matter of small importance that the adaptation for educational purposes of those modes of operating on a small scale which analytical chemists have so successfully cultivated, promise to be equally useful to the professional student, to those who study science as an intellectual pursuit, and to the artisan, who may require to test the various materials with which he works. Of late, indeed, I have seen the slips of glass used in a chemical manufactory by the workmen, in testing the materials which they employed.

But the difficulty of understanding scientific subjects has been urged against their introduction as branches of general education. If the great object be kept in view, that the mind of the young student is to be awakened to the nature of science, and not perplexed with elaborate details, which can be important to those alone who are engaged professionally in scientific pursuits, this objection will be passed over by all who have had any opportunity of observing at how

early a period young persons may be led to take an interest in science. They fix the attention more forcibly than the ordinary branches of education; all the phenomena of experimental science excite an interest in the student by the manner in which they appeal to the external senses; and when practical exercises are at the same time introduced, they contribute to give habits of observation, attention, and action; and what are of more importance in the training of youth? There the student's mind is necessarily active, for he is led to watch for an expected result, the progress of which depends upon his own exertions; he must judge of the varying appearances that are successively evolved, and regulate in all their changes the phenomena which present themselves to his notice. I am not indeed aware of any one who has carefully tried the experiment, who has not found that the study of the great truths of science is much less difficult than the study of the different languages.

It is perhaps impossible to calculate how great the advantages to society would be, were every individual taught the elements of physical science at an early period, and made familiar with the nature and qualities of those materials with which he is surrounded every moment of his life, and whose continued action exerts so powerful an influence upon his system. If we look to chemistry alone, how much light has it thrown upon the physical constitution of man, and how much might be added to our comforts, to take a familiar illustration, were the laws it has pointed out in reference to respiration, combustion, and ventilation, to be made a more especial object of attention in the construction of every kind of building! In the palace and in the cottage, the advantages would be equally manifest; and it is indeed difficult to conceive any situation in life, where a knowledge of these laws might not be advantageously applied. How many of those, again, who are practically engaged in particular arts, cannot examine the purity and the value of those materials with which they work!—surely for those alone a particular line of instruction should be adopted, to whom more elaborate courses may not be accessible, such as are intended for other classes of society who have more means and more opportunities at their command. Again, for those who emigrate to a distant land, how important would it be to make them practically familiar with the examination of water in all its varieties, the construction of fireplaces and furnaces adapted for different kinds of fuel, and the examination of limestone and one or two more minerals of great value to every community! How important an influence might the traveller, also, and even the missionary, occasionally exercise, were they capable of pointing out at times, in a remote region, some of those practical applications of science which so often suggest themselves to every intelligent and well-informed mind! How much, also, would it in many cases promote the more immediate object they may have in view, by insuring that respect and confidence which superior intelligence always commands, when it is observed in any ordinary matter of which all individuals may be competent judges!

The landed proprietor, the agriculturist, and the manufacturer, are surely interested in the chemical history of soils and minerals. To the engineer, analytical chemistry is often of the utmost practical importance; the miner by its aid ascertains the value of the ores which he extracts from the earth. To the medical man, chemistry is indispensable, supplying him at once with the most important information as to the constitution of the human frame, and with many of the most powerful means of alleviating human suffering. To the officer engaged in the survey of any distant station, chemistry is in many cases equally necessary, in enabling him to give a useful report on the mineral productions, &c. of the place which he may be called upon to visit. In the arts, again, and in daily life, to whom is chemistry not interesting and useful, independent of those who are engaged in operations founded entirely upon chemical principles? Is there any one to whom the magnificent view it unfolds of the works of creation can be presented, without tending to give him a more exalted view of that creation in which he is placed? Is there any one to whom a knowledge of the laws of heat and cold, and the various discoveries that have been made as to the history of air, water, steam, gas, fuel, and so on, may not prove practically useful?

No one can avoid remarking the more extended views which are now taken of the varied branches of knowledge which minister to the wants and comforts of life—the more careful selection of those objects and pursuits which are most deserving of attention—and, above all, the unqualified and practical admission of the great truth, that, in every situation of life, however exalted or humble, man has been created with a capacity to enjoy and to improve by a knowledge of science. It is indeed extending rapidly among all classes of society. The various popular courses which have increased so much of late years, the schools of art and mechanics' institutions, as well as the numerous scientific associations that have appeared in every part of the country, and the more general attention which matters of science now attract, lead to the hope that the time is not far distant when every member of society will have an opportunity of acquiring some practical instruction in those departments at least, a knowledge of which is intimately connected with the phenomena of daily life, and with those operations in which he may also be professionally interested.



NOVEMBER.				DECEMBER.				JANUARY.				FEBRUARY.				MARCH.			
Thermometer	Nine Morn.	Three After.	State of Weather.	Thermometer	Nine Morn.	Three After.	State of Weather.	Thermometer	Nine Morn.	Three After.	State of Weather.	Thermometer	Nine Morn.	Three After.	State of Weather.	Thermometer	Nine Morn.	Three After.	State of Weather.
1	34	45	Clear and sunshine.	1	45	43	Dull, but dry.	1	33	34	Sleety.	1	35	37	Stormy.	1	33	39	Snowy morning.
2	38	49	Hazy, but dry and	2	43	41	Clear.	2	33	36	Dull—moist.	2	30	35	Clear—dry.	2	30	35	Showery.
3	45	46	Ditto. [pleasant.	3	41	41	Clear.	3	40	44	Windy—dull.	3	35	38	Clear—dry.	3	34	43	Clear—dry.
4	41	42	Ditto.	4	40	42	Dull—rain.	4	43	43	Wet.	4	36	39	Clear—dry.	4	39	42	Clear—dry.
5	35	36	Showery—snowy.	5	31	36	Sunshine and haze.	5	42	48	Wet.	5	33	40	Clear—dry.	5	35	39	Snowy morning.
6	36	38	Showery—snowy.	6	32	35	Wet under foot.	6	44	44	Dry—cloudy.	6	37	39	Clear—dry.	6	33	37	Dull—rainy.
7	36	40	Wet and windy.	7	35	37	Foggy.	7	39	41	Dry—cloudy.	7	33	33	Clear—dry.	7	30	46	Clear—dry.
8	37	43	Clear.	8	38	42	Haze—rain.	8	40	42	Dry and sunny.	8	37	45	Windy—moist.	8	33	40	Clear—dry.
9	39	41	Dry.	9	35	37	Dull—moist.	9	33	34	Dry and sunny.	9	30	36	Showery.	9	35	42	Clear—dry.
10	37	42	Dull, but varied.	10	35	35	Clear and dry.	10	35	35	Dry and sunny.	10	35	35	Clear—dry.	10	33	42	Dull—dry.
11	37	39	Clear and sunshine.	11	30	41	Windy—clear.	11	33	33	Snow.	11	28	31	Clear—dry.	11	37	43	Showery.
12	37	42	Dry and hazy.	12	34	40	Clear.	12	26	29	Clear—frost.	12	30	37	Clear—dry.	12	40	41	Showery.
13	33	35	Clear—dry.	13	41	42	Dull.	13	34	37	Moist.	13	35	45	Clear—dry.	13	38	44	Clear—dry.
14	40	40	Clear—dry.	14	41	46	Clear.	14	40	45	Moist—windy.	14	42	45	Dull—dry.	14	38	40	Showery and windy.
15	33	35	Clear—dry.	15	35	36	Hazy.	15	31	34	Moist.	15	42	47	Clear—dry.	15	34	42	Clear—dry.
16	36	41	Clear—dry.	16	31	38	Clear.	16	26	32	Clear—frost.	16	46	43	Showery—windy.	16	35	39	Showery—hail.
17	46	49	Clear—dry.	17	43	46	Clear.	17	32	35	Clear.	17	32	39	Clear—dry.	17	46	45	Stormy—showers.
18	50	45	Windy.	18	39	44	Clear.	18	41	47	Moist—windy.	18	36	37	Clear—dry.	18	45	50	Clear—breezy.
19	37	44	Dull and moist.	19	37	39	Rain and snow.	19	34	29	Clear—frost.	19	33	37	Clear—dry.	19	46	57	Clear—dry.
20	48	49	Windy and dull.	20	34	34	Dull.	20	37	40	Cloudy—dry.	20	31	40	Clear—dry.	20	47	57	Clear—dry.
21	46	45	Rainy.	21	32	34	Cloudy—dry.	21	40	43	Windy—dry.	21	40	45	Clear—dry—windy.	21	40	50	Clear—breezy.
22	46	45	Rainy.	22	29	33	Clear.	22	41	41	Clear—sunny.	22	38	42	Sunny and showery.	22	41	49	Clear—dry.
23	37	42	Rainy.	23	31	35	Clear.	23	41	42	Very stormy & wet.	23	32	38	Clear—dry.	23	41	45	Clear—dry. [very.]
24	48	52	Dry and dull.	24	29	31	Clear.	24	40	41	Clear—dry.	24	32	32	Snow.	24	39	41	Sunny, windy, show.
25	50	51	Dull.	25	32	34	Clear.	25	39	45	Dry—windy.	25	33	36	Wet under foot.	25	36	40	Clear, light showers.
26	49	48	Clear and sunshine.	26	38	39	Clear.	26	45	44	Moist—windy.	26	26	31	Dry—frosty.	26	30	43	Clear—dry. [snow.]
27	50	46	Clear.	27	44	45	Rainy.	27	33	40	Stormy and wet.	27	29	35	Snow—rain.	27	39	44	Dull—showery—sm.
28	41	42	Clear.	28	47	49	Rainy.	28	33	34	Wet—snow.	28	35	35	Snow—rain.	28	35	35	Dull—showery.
29	37	48	Clear.	29	39	40	Cloudy.	29	29	31	Snowy.	29	33	38	Clear—dry.	29	37	39	Showery—sunny.
30	44	43	Dull and moist.	30	36	36	Dull.	30	34	34	Clear.	[able.]				30	38	42	Showery.
				31	36	36	Moist.	31	36	36	Showery—change.					31	39	40	Showery—snowy.

TABLE OF THE WEATHER.

THERE being, as we have reason to believe, not a little misapprehension in the southern parts of Britain respecting the climate of Scotland, which is usually represented as being cold and comfortless, particularly during the winter months, we have thought it worth while to attempt the rectification of what we conceive to be an erroneous opinion, and that by the most efficacious means—the publication of an accurate register of the weather for that period of the year which is the most inclement and cheerless. With this view, the above table has been prepared. It has been carefully drawn up by ourselves, from a personal inspection of the thermometer, twice a day, namely, at nine o'clock in the morning and three o'clock afternoon, from the 1st of November 1835, till the 31st of March 1836; and besides indicating the degree of heat of the atmosphere at these hours, we have introduced a short remark on the general character of the weather of each day respectively. The thermometer is one of the common Fahrenheit description, placed in the open air in one of the streets of Edinburgh, and in the shade in a northern exposure. Fractions of degrees are not reckoned, and therefore the scale has no pretension to philosophical accuracy. This, however, is of no moment. All that we want to show is the nature of the climate, with a view to the removal of a prejudice, and the establishment of an important statistical truth.

The most striking fact developed by the table is the wonderful equability and height of the temperature. During the whole of November, the thermometer was not once, during the day, at the freezing point; in December, it was only at or below that point seven times; in January five times; in February seven times; and in March it did not once reach that point. Let it be noted, also, that at no time did the temperature fall below 24°, namely, on the 19th of January, which was the coldest day in the season. During the nights, the temperature would of course be somewhat lower. During April, the thermometer ranged chiefly from 41° to 53°, and was only once at the freezing point. On comparing the table with the meteorological journals of the Royal Society for the same period, it will be seen that the temperature in London was sometimes much lower than it was in Edinburgh. For instance, it will be remembered that Christmas day was one of intense frost in London, the temperature being as low as 21° or 22°; on the same day in Edinburgh the temperature was not below 32°, or barely touching the freezing point, while the atmosphere was clear and beautiful. Other instances might be mentioned of this remarkable diversity. While the accounts from the south during the whole winter have described the sharpness of the frosts, the depth of the snows, and the stoppage of conveyances by land and water, there has been nothing of the kind in relation to Edinburgh, or its vicinity. Here there has been no ice, no skating, no curling, and no snows have fallen to above one or two inches in depth. It is at the same time right to state, that in the North Highlands the winter has been as severe as it has been in the south, and the hills within sight of Edinburgh have for some months exhibited streaks of snow.

To judge of the pleasantness or unpleasantness of a climate by the degrees of heat or cold which prevail, is not, it will be allowed, the most correct mode of estimation. A keen frost may prevail, yet the weather be exceedingly pleasant, and by no means unhealthful. Dryness is a better criterion than cold. On this principle, then, we point to our remarks in the table, by which it appears that there has not, at least during the day, been a superabundance of moist weather in our wintry season. In February, in particular, there were many beautiful dry days, with clear sunshine overhead. March was our worst month in this respect; it was in general moist and showery; and as there was also some wet backward weather in April, the summer has been correspondingly retarded. Winter apparently exhausted itself with an outburst of coldish weather, with a few showers of hail, at the close of April and opening of May. Taking all circumstances together, and reckoning last winter to be of an average quality—one neither very cold nor very agreeable—the opinion which may be reasonably come to respecting the nature of our climate, can hardly fail to be favourable. It is at least certain, that, if the mean temperature of our atmosphere throughout the year be a degree lower than it is in the southern part of the island (which it is), the weather generally is neither less agreeable nor less suited for open-air exercise.

## THE WESTERN ISLANDERS.

THE inhabitants of some of the outer or more remote Hebrides are still in a semi-barbarous state. The numerous grades into which the population of civilised countries is divided, have no existence among them, there being but two classes of society, the one constituted by the tacksmen or more opulent farmers, the other by the great body of the people, living in a state of extreme ignorance and poverty. As to the lairds, the degenerate descendants of the ancient chiefs, being, like the swans or bernacles, but occasional visitants, they can hardly be admitted as the constituents of a class of society at all. They belong to other regions, where let them find their designation. The feudal chief, the barbarian despot of a cringing but ruthless gang of bare-legged savages, is no more. The progress of civilisation has swept him along in its eddies, which, while it has left his tail behind, has converted him into the polished gentleman, needy and griping, who finds a most apt representative in the feaser, which, while it disdains to fish for itself, squeezes a portion of its contents from the aching stomach of every gull it meets with in its jurisdiction: the blame is not ours. We must be understood, however, as speaking generally; for with reference to the lairds of the Outer Hebrides, of whom we know as few as we care to know, we have only to say, that while there may be feasers among them, there may be gulls also, and we hope a pelican or two, who, for the benefit of their needy brood, might be occasionally disposed to part with a little of the heart's best blood, the circulating solid by which society is maintained. It is not our purpose at present to describe the domestic economy of the poor Hebridians, or to enter upon the peculiarities of their temperament or situation, our object being merely to present a few facts relative to their mode of living during the summer months, when, like their own cows in spring, they experience a periodical scarcity of food, closely approaching to absolute famine. In this matter we speak from observation, and to a certain extent from experience.

By the end of May, the meal-kist and potato garner of a Hebridian family have been emptied and swept. From this period till the beginning of September, when the potato crop begins to be made available, the natives live in a great measure upon the wild produce of their shores. Formerly they had a considerable quantity of milk during this season; but now that a much greater anxiety is manifested by the lairds and factors for the improvement of the breeds of hoofed and horned cattle, than for the comfort of their tenantry, few families can contrive to instil a comfortable portion of this fluid into their emaciated children. The sea, indeed, swarms with fish; and it may naturally be asked, why do they not supply themselves with it? The reasons are these: the males, and many of the females, are during the greater part of this season engaged in the kelp manufacture, by the miserable earnings procured from which they are enabled to pay the greater part of their rents. Further, the poor creatures are unable to keep boats and lines for fishing; and if they could procure these articles, it would be necessary to entrust their management to children. The moment the tide has ebbed, there issues from every hamlet and hut, a multitude of women and children, furnished with bags and iron hooks. With these hooks they furrow the sands in search of the sand-eel, which generally affords at least a meal per diem during the spring tides. At other times they are to be seen scattered along the rocky shores, assiduously picking from the stones the limpets and welks, which are extremely abundant, and which, together with the crabs, lobsters, and sea-weeds which they procure, enable them to retire to rest with a comfortably repleted stomach. The great sands and fords are in many places studded full of cockles of excellent quality, and of this circumstance they take advantage to eke out their scanty and unsavoury store of victuals. We have seen more than fifty horse-loads of cockles carried off at a single ebb from one of these fords. Besides these species of shell-fish, there are others which afford an occasional supply, such as the oyster and large clam. These, however, are very limited in their distribution, and not easily procured. Mussels also, although not a favourite article of food, are occasionally eaten; the limpet is most extensively used. It is the standard article of food in the summer months. It is, however, a coarse and disagreeable food, and seems to afford little nutrition. There are two distinct varieties of it. One of a greenish-grey colour, common on all the rocky shores, is the best; the other of much larger size, of a yellowish colour, and having a more conical and thicker shell, occurs chiefly on the headlands, and is hardly eatable. The best is probably the cockle, which is also very abundant. It is occasionally eaten raw, in which state it is greatly superior to the oyster. But although the Hebridians may be said to live during the summer months upon delicacies, they thrive very ill upon them; and a morsel of oat or barley bread would be to them a far greater luxury than a sand-eel, an oyster, or a lobster, would be to an Athenian bailie. We have seen persons in Harris, toward the end of summer, as much emaciated as patients in a pretty advanced stage of consumption. It is wonderful to see how quickly they get round when they fall to the potato crop. In the course of a few weeks they are as vigorous and lively as ever. Then comes the season of cuddies (the fry of *Gadus carbonarius*), when every man is busily employed, during a portion of the day, in raking out of the sea multitudes of these innocent creatures. We must add, that in their greatest distress these remnants of the Celto-Scandinavian race are never depressed by melancholy. Their cheerfulness never forsakes them. Under like circumstances, Englishmen would be hanging and drowning themselves, and true Scottish lads would become sulky and taciturn; but the Hebridian, inured to hardships, and privation-proof, is as merry as a

kitten, even while hunger is gnawing the innermost membrane of his stomach, and his emaciated fingers have scarce pith enough left in them to execute the easiest labour.—*Edinburgh Literary Gazette.*

#### ELIZA CARTHAGO.

Ox the banks of the river Ancobra, at the distance of fifty miles from the sea, on the western coast of Africa, are seen the ruins of an old Dutch fortress, named Eliza Carthago. This fortress was built about the year 1700, in a lonely situation, far from the reach of European assistance at Elmina on the coast, and was intended to protect the commerce of the Dutch with the natives. This loneliness was not remedied by internal strength; for the utmost force placed there consisted of a handful of soldiers, a drummer, and a sergeant. The governor had resided in it for many years, and had apparently conciliated the natives. It was in the neighbourhood of the gold-pits; and during his trade he had amassed a quantity of rock-gold, and was altogether so rich, from possessing the exclusive commerce of this part of the interior, that he at length excited the cupidity of his neighbours. They met in council, and vowed to aid each other till the white man was ruined, never taking into consideration that his wealth had been won by fair dealing with themselves; that they had been the willing instruments of his success; and that they had also been enriched by their mutual barter. "No; it was not right that a white man should come and take away their gold, and they never would rest satisfied till they had it all back again." It was necessary for them, however, to act cautiously, for they had no desire that the fort should be for ever abandoned, as it kept the trade open, and supplied them with European articles at a much easier rate than by going to Elmina for them.

Their first plan was to invent some pretext for quarrelling with the governor; and, accordingly, the next bargain that took place between them was accompanied by so much extortion on their parts, that the Dutchman could not comply with their demands. His continued resistance at length produced the wished-for dispute, or palaver, and open hostility manifested itself on the side of the natives. His cattle disappeared, his plantations were destroyed, his trade was stopped, and he was not allowed to purchase food in the market. His slaves contrived for a while to procure provisions, as if for themselves; but their trick being discovered, they were forbidden to come into the town again for that purpose, under pain of death; and their master was reduced to live on the salted stores of the fortress.

The governor now began to think more seriously of the quarrel than he had hitherto done, and dispatched a trusty messenger to head-quarters for assistance. He then summoned the chiefs of the town to the fortress to talk over the dispute. This only produced still greater irritation; and the next morning he found himself surrounded by the natives, who were well armed with muskets, bows, and arrows. He shut up the fort, loaded the few guns which he possessed, and, parleying with them from the ramparts, threatened to fire on them if they did not retire. They only answered him with shouts of defiance. Still the poor governor hesitated, because, this step once taken, the difficulty of ever coming to an amicable arrangement was increased. He lingered in the hope of assistance from Elmina; but, exasperated at the death of one of his soldiers, who was shot as he walked along the walls, he at length fired. Great destruction was occasioned; but his enemies were like hydras; the more he killed, the more their numbers seemed to increase; and day after day was spent in regular warfare. His soldiers were cut off by the skilful aim of these excellent marksmen; and, what was worse than all, his ammunition was fast decreasing. His cannon became useless; for in a short time he had not a man left who could manage them, or a ball to load them with. As long as he possessed iron and leaden bars, and brass rods, all of which are articles of trade, he was enabled to fire on the people with muskets; but at length even these failed him, and he was reduced to some barrels of gunpowder. Every day he hoped for relief; every day he resorted to the bastion which overlooked the path to Elmina; but every day he was disappointed. Still every hour held out a hope; and he melted his rock-gold into bullets, and fired with these till he had no more. He was now entirely destitute of the means of defence; his stores were daily lessening, and want had already occasioned the desertion of his followers, who secretly stole from the fort and took refuge with the enemy. When the unhappy man mounted the walls with his telescope to look towards Elmina, his adversaries insulted him, and asked him when he expected news from the coast, and how many bullets he had left; and they showed him the pieces of gold which they had either picked up, or taken out of the bodies of those who had been killed by them. Finding that he still watched and hoped, they brought in sight his messenger, who had been intercepted and put in irons by the wretches, before he had proceeded many miles on his way to Elmina.

This struck the ill-fated European with despair: every resource was gone; his only companions were a man, who had lived with him many years, and an orphan boy, both of whom had refused to quit him. With these he consulted, and seeing his destruction inevitable, he determined at least to be revenged on the villains who had bayed him to death. Assisted by the two servants, he placed all his gunpowder, which still

amounted to a considerable quantity, in a small room underneath the hall of audience. He then passed the night in arranging his papers, making up the government accounts, willing away the property he had realised and sent home, and writing to a few friends. These dispatches he carefully secured on the person of the man, who had orders to try to make his escape with them the next morning, and to convey them to head-quarters.

At daybreak the governor appeared on the walls of his fortress, and made signs to the people without, that he wished to speak with them. He gained a hearing, and then told them that he was now willing to give them whatever they asked, and to settle the matter exactly as they wished; that, if the chiefs would come into the fort in about two hours to drink rum, they would find him ready to deliver up his property to any amount they pleased. This proposal was agreed to, the governor received his guests in the hall, and the people poured into the fortress. During the bustle which this occasioned, the faithful servant contrived to escape, and, creeping through the bushes, made the best of his way to Elmina. He had not proceeded far, however, when he heard a tremendous explosion; he turned round, and smoke, stones, and mangled human bodies, were seen mingled together in the atmosphere. However prepared, the man involuntarily stopped to contemplate this awful catastrophe, and was only roused by the boy whom he had left with his master. It appears that the governor affected to treat with the chiefs till he thought they were all assembled; he then reproached them with their perfidy and ingratitude, and exclaimed, "Now then, rascals, I will give you all I possess—all!" and stamped his foot with violence. This was the signal to the boy below, who instantly set fire to a covered train, sufficiently long to allow him to rush from the approaching mischief; and scarcely had he cleared the gates of the fortress, when all the chiefs perished with their victim, and many were killed who had met in the court.

The man and boy reached Elmina with the dreadful tale; and the ruin of the fortress, now an overgrown heap of stones, attests the truth of the story.

[From "Stories of Strange Lands," by Mrs Lee. Moxon, London.]

**THE PROCESS OF SCULPTURE.**—A skeleton of wood and iron is constructed in the shape of the figure to be made, round which the modelling clay may be wrought—a constant practice with those who feel it to be wiser to work in a soft and pliable material, than commit themselves with small models in the difficulties of marble. On this skeleton of wood the naked figure is raised; and a proper framework is constructed to support hanging draperies or outstretched arms. Wire and bits of wood will suspend arms or folds; while the whole skeleton is kept in its position by an upright piece of timber resembling the mast of a ship, which rises out of the centre of the turning-backer on which the statue is to be modelled. When the skeleton is ready, and the modelling clay nicely beat up till it is as pliable as the softest dough, the artist places the sketch which he means to copy before him, and cutting the square lumps of clay into long thin slices, he works it round the framework and beats it solidly in, so as to leave no crevices in which water may lodge and endanger his labour. The clay, wrought with tools of wood and with the hand, gradually grows into the desired form: the artist turns the figure round and round—proves it in strong and in weak lights—compares it with living and also dead models; and when he conceives it to be in true proportion, and expressing the wished-for sentiment, he proceeds to clothe or drape it. All statues are modelled naked, and then clothed; this ensures accuracy of proportion and gracefulness of shape, without which no drapery will hang with elegance, and fine workmanship is thrown away. To obtain a natural and flowing drapery, a cloak or robe of the same texture of that to be represented is put upon the clay-figure, the figure itself fixed in the proper position, and the robe adjusted till it falls in the desired manner: the general idea of the drapery, the chief leading lines, are already determined, and from the robe the detail is copied. In these great essentials, proper conception of sentiment, posture, and drapery, Flaxman was a master. When the model is completed, a mould is then made over the clay statue in plaster of Paris; and all the clay which composed the model and the framework which sustained it are removed. The mould being made in two parts, is readily washed, placed together, and the cast is then formed of a finer plaster than the mould, and irons are put up the centre to support it. With a wooden mallet and a blunt chisel formed like a wedge, the artist removes the outer mould, which peels readily off; and when the plaster statue is entirely cleaned down, it should be dried in a hot stove; and then it may be used for copying into marble. It is true that Michael Angelo grappled at once with the marble block, and, with the figure shaped in imagination before him, heaved it boldly out, and derided those who went the round-about way of models. But this was a wild waste of time; had he modelled his statue in clay, and cast it in plaster, and got it rough-hewn by some ordinary hand, he might have made three where he made but one, and, at the same time, avoided those mistakes in proportion of which he is accused.—*Cunningham's Lives of British Painters and Sculptors.*

#### THE KHAN'S LEFT EYE.

A rich old man who resided at Ispahan had three daughters, the youngest of whom, named Kookja, was as much distinguished for her beauty as for her extraordinary wisdom. One morning, as he was about to drive his cattle for sale to the Khan's market-place, he asked them what presents he should bring them on his return. The two eldest wished trinkets, but the handsome and wise Kookja said she did not desire a present, but that she had a request to make which it would be difficult and even dangerous for him to execute. Her father, who loved her exceedingly, promised to do whatever she wished, though it were at the price of his life. "If that is the case," replied Kookja, "I beg you will sell all your cattle except the brown ox, and ask no other price for that than the Khan's left eye." The old man was startled, but, confiding in his daughter's wisdom, resolved to do as she wished. He accordingly went to market, and did exactly as she had directed. When his singular demand came to be heard by the courtiers, they bound him, and carried him before the Khan, as a madman. The old man threw himself at the prince's feet, and confessed his demand had been made at the request of his daughter, of whose motive he was perfectly ignorant. The Khan, suspecting that some secret must be concealed under this extraordinary request, dismissed the old man, on condition that he would return with the daughter who had directed him to make it.

In a short time Kookja appeared, escorted by her father. The Khan demanded her motive for so singular a request. "I expected, my prince, after so strange a demand, curiosity would prompt you to send for me, and I wished to tell you a truth important to yourself and people." "Name it," "When two persons appear before you in a cause, the wealthy and noble generally stand on your right hand, the poor and humble on your left. I have heard you favour the noble and rich. This is the reason I persuaded my father to ask your left eye, it being of no use to you, since you never see the poor and unprotected." The Khan was a good deal incensed at the presumption of Kookja; but by the advice of one of his councillors, he resolved to try whether her strange proceedings were the effect of malice or of wisdom. He accordingly called for a log of wood, cut evenly on every side, and desired Kookja to discover the top from the root. She threw it into water, and soon found the answer, by means of the root sinking, while the top rose to the surface. After this she was shown two snakes, and challenged to determine the male from the female. The wise Kookja laid them on cotton; one immediately coiled itself in the form of a ring, the other crept away. She concluded from these circumstances (and she concluded rightly) that the latter was a male, the former a female. The Khan, being still dissatisfied, asked her if a number of persons were sent into a wood to gather apples, which of them would have the most. "The one," replied Kookja, "who, instead of climbing the trees, remains below, to pick up those which are sure to fall on the shaking of the branches." The Khan then led her to a pen, and asked her which would be the readiest way to get to the opposite side. Kookja said to cross it would be the farthest, to go round the nearest. The Khan, vexed at the readiness and propriety of her answers, reflected for some time, and then resumed the colloquy, by putting rapidly a series of questions, to all of which she gave prompt answers. Which was the surest means of becoming known to many? "By assisting many who are unknown." Which is the most certain method of obtaining happiness? "By diffusing happiness, as far as lies in our power, to all around; beginning every morning with a prayer, and ending every evening with a good action." Who is truly wise? "He who does not believe himself to be so." What are the requisites of a good wife? "She should be gentle as a lamb, prudent as a mouse, industrious as an ant, just as a faithful mirror, and pure as the scale of a fish. She must mourn for her deceased husband as a dove, and live in her widowhood as a bird deprived of its wings."

The Khan was astonished at the wisdom of the fair Kookja; yet, being enraged at her reproaching him with injustice, he still sought to destroy her. After a few days he thought he had found the means of attaining his object. He sent for her, and desired she would determine the true value of all his treasure; after which, he promised to absolve her from the offence of questioning his justice, and admit that she intended, as a wise woman, merely to admonish him. Kookja consented to do what was required, on condition that the Khan would promise implicit obedience to her command for three days, which was, that he should not taste food for that time. On the last day she placed a dish of meat before him, and said, "Confess, oh Khan, that all thy treasures are not worth as much as this joint of meat." The Khan was so stricken with the truth of this remark, and the proofs he had had of her superior wisdom, that he married her to his son, and permitted her constantly to remind him to use his left eye.

[From the Spirit of Literature.]

EDINBURGH: Published by WILLIAM and ROBERT CHAMBERS, 19, Waterloo Place; and ORR & SMITH, Paternoster Row, London. Agents—John Macleod, 20, Argyle Street, Glasgow; George Young, Dublin; and sold by all other Booksellers.

Subscribers in town may have the Paper left at their houses every Saturday morning, by giving their addresses at 19, Waterloo Place. Price of a quarter of 12 weeks, 1s. 6d.; price for half a year or year in proportion. In every case payable in advance. From the Steam-press of W. and R. Chambers.